

University, member of the Board of Education, and serving as a special assistant to former U.S. Representative Bruce Morrison, John was a driving force in revitalizing the economy and development of New Haven.

Perhaps his most distinguished service to the New Haven community was his tenure as Executive Director of the Hill Development Corporation. Hill Development is a non-profit corporation located in the Hill neighborhood that works to provide low-income housing and other services to some of our community's most vulnerable families. John's tenure as the Executive Director began at a time when the agency was struggling financially and lacked essential community support. John's dedication and unparalleled commitment brought community support to the Hill Development Corporation and the direction needed to ensure its success. Today, the Hill Development Corporation is one of the city's most successful non-profit agencies—an achievement made possible through John's leadership and vision.

As you may know, John is now the Deputy Director of the United States Office of Personnel Management. He has also served the Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for the Federal Housing Administration and as Director of the Federal Housing Administration's office of Insured Health Care Facilities at the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is great to know that what John and his wife, Awilda, were able to achieve at the local level in New Haven, they are now able to do on a national scale. My congratulations to both of them.

It is an honor for me to take this opportunity to join the New Haven Hispanic community to offer my most sincere thanks to my good friend, John Sepulveda, for the many contributions he has made to the City of New Haven.

ST. MARY'S CENTENNIAL

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues St. Mary's Polish National Catholic Church in Duryea, Pennsylvania. The parish will celebrate its Centennial Anniversary with a banquet this month and I am proud to have been asked to participate in this event.

In the nineteenth century, many immigrants from Eastern Europe flocked to Northeastern Pennsylvania to pursue the American dream of religious and economic freedom. In 1897, a group of Polish immigrants in the area found a true leader in a young priest named Francis Hodur. He guided them spiritually and, under his leadership, a "mother church" was founded in Scranton. Today, this beautiful church is known to all as St. Stanislaus Cathedral.

A year later, another group of Polish Catholics invited Father Hodur to help them organize their own parish. They applied for a charter and in September of 1899, a charter was granted to Saint Mary's Polish National Catholic Church. Through the hard work and dedication of the parish, a new church was built and dedicated by 1908. While renovating and improving the original church building over the years, the parish has striven to keep and restore the beautiful original statues, altars, and other church artifacts.

Mr. Speaker, this proud parish in Duryea has much to celebrate. The hard working, dedicated parishioners at this beautiful church contribute to the fine quality of life that we enjoy in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Father Thadeusz Kluczek and the church's members help to continue the traditions of the country of their ancestors so that generations to come will feel the spirit and dedication of the small group of Polish immigrants who founded St. Mary's. I am pleased to have had this opportunity to bring this proud church's history to the attention of my colleagues and send my heartiest congratulations and best wishes to everyone at St. Mary's Polish National Catholic Church.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1059, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 1999

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering an excellent FY 2000 Defense Authorization Conference Report, and I thank the conferees in the House and Senate for their leadership in bringing this bill to the floor.

With rapidly growing threats worldwide to our national security, we must begin to rebuild our military from years of decimation and escalating deployments. Mr. Speaker, this authorization responds to these concerns.

As a former navigator of a B-52 bomber in the Air Force and a Vietnam veteran, I am particularly excited about the upgrades and procurement of Air Force and Navy aircraft, especially for the EA-6B Prowler—our military's only radar support jammer for all the services, including joint air operations. Further, the pilot retention reforms contained in the Authorization, including enlistment bonus and special pay reform, are essential. We have the best Air Force in the world—no country comes close. Yet we have trouble holding on to the best pilots because we simply do not take care of them.

We frequently ask our men and women in the military to leave their families, fight for our national security, and even die for our freedom and liberty. Yet, we do not provide our service personnel with the pay or equipment it takes to get the job done right. It is appalling that even one of these families must seek welfare just to put food on the table and buy clothes for their children. I honestly believe that the authorization we have before us today will go a long way in correcting this problem.

I urge my colleagues to support this conference report, which will prove a boon to the dedicated soldiers in our armed services.

SIDNEY PEERLESS, M.D., TO RE- CEIVE AMERICAN JEWISH COM- MITTEE HONOR

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, the American Jewish Committee's Cincinnati Chapter will

soon give special recognition to one of my most distinguished constituents and a good friend, Sidney Peerless, M.D. On October 9, Dr. Peerless will be presented with the prestigious Community Service Award.

Dr. Peerless, an otolaryngologist and plastic surgeon, is well known and respected as a physician. He has directed the otolaryngology department at both Providence and Jewish Hospitals, and he was president of the medical staff at Jewish Hospital. Dr. Peerless is a clinical professor at the University of Cincinnati, and was recently honored by the University for his contributions to teaching.

A committed community leader, Dr. Peerless has been a member of the boards of the Jewish National Fund; Bonds for Israel; the Cincinnati Zoo; Children's Hospital; Shaare Zedek Hospital; and Jewish Hospital. Dr. Peerless has received numerous awards, including the Cincinnati Academy of Medicine's Daniel Drake Award for service to the Cincinnati community and to patients, and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Hebrew Union College.

Dr. Peerless was born in Cincinnati and graduated from the University of Cincinnati. He has five children and fourteen grandchildren.

All of us in the Cincinnati area congratulate Dr. Peerless on receiving this prestigious and well deserved award, and we commend him for his lifelong dedication to his patients and his community.

IN HONOR OF AMERICAN MUSLIM ALLIANCE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 4TH ANNUAL AMA NA- TIONAL CONVENTION

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the leadership of the American Muslim Alliance (AMA) and all the convention participants on the occasion of the Fourth Annual AMA National Convention being held in Orlando, Florida.

Political participation in the electoral process is important for every American. I commend the participants of AMA for its activity in gaining knowledge and making the necessary contacts for full involvement in the American political process.

I commend the AMA for its ability to rise above basic participation to motivating American Muslims to become active participants in public office. AMA local and national organizers, through leadership training sessions held in several states, have set the groundwork for American Muslims themselves to run for elected positions. By encouraging Muslims to run for public office, the AMA has brought political participation among the Muslim community to a higher level.

It is evident that AMA has played a crucial role in training and educating American Muslims nationwide about the political process. My colleagues, please join me in honoring AMA and its convention participants for this conference that will hopefully motivate more Muslims to consider a future in public service.